



**United States  
Department of  
Agriculture**

Office of the Chief  
Financial Officer

1400 Independence  
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Washington, DC  
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SEP 26 2008

**TO:** Department of Agriculture Travel Cardholders

**FROM:** Charles R. Christopherson, Jr.  
Chief Financial Officer  
Chief Information Officer

**SUBJECT:** Transition to U.S. Bank for Travel Card Services

The Bank of America's contract with the United States Government to provide charge card services will expire on November 30, 2008. The Department of Agriculture (USDA) has selected U.S. Bank to provide travel charge card services. USDA is taking steps to transition current Bank of America cardholders to U.S. Bank with as little disruption as possible. The Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) has provided updates to your agency's representatives through the Travel Policy User Group and will continue to make them aware of developing transition details. Current transition details that you should be aware of are:

- Current cardholders will not be required to submit to a credit check or complete an application in order to receive a U.S. Bank card;
- A new U.S. Bank card will be sent to the billing address of your current Bank of America card;
- New cards will arrive starting October 1<sup>st</sup> through November 15<sup>th</sup>;
- Cards should be activated (by calling the number on the card) when they are received, but will not work until 12:01 a.m. November 30, 2008. Bank of America cards will stop working at 11:59 p.m. on November 29, 2008. Employees on travel during the transition should carry both cards;
- Automated teller machine (ATM) pins will be sent separately and should arrive within a week after the card is received; and
- OCFO is working with Northrop Grumman to automatically update the GovTrip profiles with your new card's information. In addition, they are developing a plan to transition GovTrip's split payment function from Bank of America to U.S. Bank with minimal confusion. A separate letter will be sent to your agency representatives when these details are finalized.

USDA has also taken this opportunity to enhance the travel card program. Below is a list of improvements that will affect you.

- A website has been created with key charge card program data. The website will provide contact information of program coordinators with links to key regulations and training. This website is [www.usda.gov/procurement/ccsc](http://www.usda.gov/procurement/ccsc);
- Bank system access is being offered to all cardholders. This will allow you to log into your account to view statements, check balances, dispute transactions and make electronic payments. Instructions on how to obtain system access will be included with your card;
- The bank system will send email alerts to cardholders to inform them of important issues related to the travel card program. All cardholders must register for bank system access and enter an email address in their profile in order to receive these alerts;
- Online training will be provided on how to use your travel card in compliance with Federal and USDA policies. This training will be available at any time, but USDA is mandating that all cardholders complete it annually. OCFO will inform your agency's Travel Policy User Group representatives when the training is available. Cardholders will be given at least 60 days to complete the training before enforcing the mandatory requirements;
- Online training on how to use the bank system is also available. This training will include both structured lessons and short user guides;
- Credit checks for all new accounts will continue with the U.S. Bank contract. However, USDA is implementing some changes to this process to assist cardholders:
  - When new cardholders activate their card, the bank's automated system will inform them if their card is restricted;
  - At the cardholder's request, U.S. Bank will reevaluate a cardholder's credit score annually to determine if they can be moved out of restricted status; and
  - USDA has redefined "restricted" under the U.S. Bank contract. The credit limit will no longer be severely restricted. This will allow cardholders to purchase the major transportation and lodging expenses required to perform their official duties. Instead, ATM access will not be available for restricted cards; and
- The Department has worked with U.S. Bank to implement procedures to allow employees who have had their card privileges revoked to be able to apply for reinstatement. USDA policy will be revised to allow reinstatement shortly after the transition to U.S. Bank. The details of this revised policy will be provided to your agency's Travel Policy User Group representatives when the policy changes are finalized.

If you have any questions, please contact your agency program coordinator. If they are unable to answer your questions or you do not know who your agency program coordinator is, contact Aaron Prose at (202) 720-1558 or [aaron.prose@usda.gov](mailto:aaron.prose@usda.gov).

cc: Chief Financial Officers Council  
Travel Policy User Group